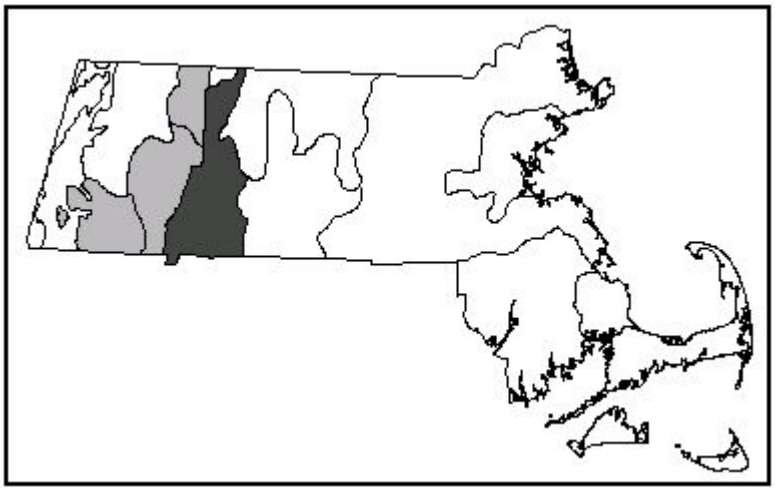
Community Name: **RIVERINE POINTBAR AND BEACH**
Community ELCODE: CP2A0B2500
SRANK: S3



Concept: Sparsely vegetated exposed sandy beaches of major rivers.

Environmental setting: A poorly defined community type that is similar to high-energy riverbank communities but occurs on river-deposited sands rather than cobbles. Riverine pointbars/beaches may best be considered a sub-type of high-energy riverbanks. They are also associated with riverside outcrops and floodplain forests. More information is needed.

Vegetation Description: Open sand bars with sparse herbaceous and graminoid vegetation cover. Much of the community may be bare sand with only scattered plants, such as tall beggar's ticks (*Bidens vulgata*). Higher margins typically have smartweeds (*Polygonum* spp.), cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*), and graminoids, including soft-stemmed spike-sedge (*Eleocharis obtusa*), Smith's club-sedge (*Scirpus smithii*), awned flatsedge (*Cyperus squarrosus*), pondshore-flatsedge (*Cyperus dentatus*), and lovegrass (*Eragrostis* spp.). Sandbar willow (*Salix exigua)*, a state-protected plant species, can occur along the higher margins. More information on species composition is needed. The Hudsonia riverside barrens of New Hampshire and southern Maine are not known to occur in Massachusetts.

Associations: No associations have been described in Massachusetts.

Habitat values for Associated Fauna:

Associated rare plants:

ELEOCHARIS INTERMEDIA	INTERMEDIATE SPIKE-SEDGE	T
ELEOCHARIS OBTUSA VAR OVATA	OVATE SPIKE-SEDGE	E
SALIX EXIGUA	SANDBAR WILLOW	SC

Associated rare animals:

CICINDELA DUODECIMGUTTATA	TWELVE-SPOTTED TIGER BEETLE	SC
CICINDELA PURITANA	PURITAN TIGER BEETLE	E
GOMPHUS FRATERNUS	MIDLAND CLUBTAIL	E
GOMPHUS VASTUS	COBRA CLUBTAIL	SC
GOMPHUS VENTRICOSUS	SKILLET CLUBTAIL	SC
STYLURUS SPINICEPS	A CLUBTAIL DRAGONFLY	T

From: Swain, P.C. & J.B. Kearsley. 2001. Classification of the Natural Communities of Massachusetts. Version 1.3. Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Division of Fisheries & Wildlife. Westborough, MA.

Examples with Public Access: sandy beach on Connecticut River at Hatfield bend, Hatfield; Connecticut River at Pauchaug Meadows WMA Northfield; Rainbow Beach, Northampton.

Threats: Trampling from campers and boaters negatively impacts both the plant and animal communities of riverine pointbar and beach communities. Alterations to normal flooding regimes can impact alluvial deposition, resulting in expansion or reduction of beach size. The exotic invasive Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) is a very aggressive colonizer of riverside communities and can displace native species where it becomes established.

Management needs: Cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*) and Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) removal may be necessary from areas used as larval habitat by Puritan tiger beetles. The two species grow quickly and shade large areas thus eliminating habitat for the tiger beetles. More information is needed to assess the management needs for pointbars and beaches.

Synonyms

USNVC/TNC: Not described. (Loosely similar to Hudsonia tomentosa-Paronychia argyrocoma dwarf-shrubland [CEGL006232]).

MA [old name]: Not described.

ME: 2001 – related to Hudsonia River Beach and Sand Cherry – Tufted Hairgrass River Beach. 1991 - River beach community.

VT: Riverside sand /gravel community.

NH: Related to Riverside sand/gravel barren and Dwarf cherry riverside sand-cobble barren.

NY: Similar to Riverside sand /gravel bar.

CT: Not described.

RI: Included within Riverside sand /gravel bar.

Golet & Larson, 1974:

Other:

Author: J. Kearsley **Date:** 7/21/99